

In the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 2, and 6 to read as follows:

1. An X-strap assembly for securing an article of footwear to the instep of a foot, said footwear having a sole and channel through said sole, said X-strap assembly comprising:

- B1
- a) a strap attached at its respective ends to medial and lateral heel sides of said footwear, said strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across the instep from a first side of said footwear to a second side, a second portion extending through said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the instep from said first side to said second side of said footwear, said first and said third portions forming an X-configuration over said instep; wherein said channel is located at the mid-foot portion of the sole, and wherein said channel passes completely across the sole; and
 - b) a fastener attached to said strap.

2. An article of footwear, comprising:

- a) a sole, the sole having a midfoot portion and a heel portion;
- b) a channel extending transversely across the midfoot portion of said sole;
- c) an instep strap connected to said heel portion of said sole, said instep strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across a wearer's instep from one side of said sole to the other, a second portion extending through said channel and slidable within said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said one side of said sole to said other side of said sole, the first and third portions of said instep strap forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep, and the second portion being between the first and third portions of said instep strap; and
- d) an adjustable fastener attached to said instep strap for adjusting said instep strap.

6. A footwear product to be worn by a user on the user's foot, comprising:

- B 2
- a) a sole, the sole having a midfoot portion;
 - b) a transverse passageway extending through said midfoot portion of said sole;
 - c) a strap system configured to secure the footwear product to the user's foot including:
a heel portion,

an X-strap assembly coupled to said heel portion, wherein said X-strap assembly includes a continuous strap having a first portion extending transversely across the user's instep from said